



# ST. CLAIR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

19 Public Square, Suite 150

Belleville, IL 62220

(618) 233-7769

\*\*\*\*\*Press Release\*\*\*\*\*

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Contact: Marilyn Vise

618-825-4401

## Prevent Illness - Take Precautions



Clean your hands, Cover your mouth and Contain illness by staying home are among the recommend steps to preventing illness.

That's what health officials from the [St. Clair County Health Department](http://www.health.co.st-clair.il.us/gov) (www.health.co.st-clair.il.us/gov) advise to avoid respiratory illnesses, like Enterovirus (EV-D68) or

influenza. Recently, there have been confirmed reports of the enterovirus in Illinois and Missouri.

Enteroviruses are very common viruses, second only to the common cold. Anyone can be infected with the EV-D68, but infants, children and adolescents are more likely to become ill than adults, according to [Illinois Department of Public Health](http://www.idph.state.il/us) (IDPH). Symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing, and wheezing or asthma exacerbation, according to IDPH. (www.idph.state.il/us).

EV-D68 is spread through close contact with infected people. There are no vaccines available for EV-D68. Special laboratory tests are required to diagnose EV-D68. There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infections. There are no anti-viral medications currently available for EV-68. Many infections will be mild and self-limited, requiring only symptomatic treatment. Some persons infected with EV-D68 may require hospitalization, according to IDPH.

Medical providers should report clusters or outbreaks of unexplained respiratory illness to the St. Clair County Health Department.

Health officials recommend taking the following precautions to prevent infections like EV-D68 and the flu:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick
- Stay home when feeling sick, and see your health care provider.

It's also time to get those influenza (flu) shots. A vaccine is the best way to protect against the influenza. The [Center for Disease Control & Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov) (CDC) (www.cdc.gov) recommends that all persons age 6 months and older get vaccinated annually as the most important step in preventing the influenza.

Flu shots are available at many locations, including a doctor's office, pharmacies and clinics. Children up to age 19 years of age are eligible for immunizations provided through the Vaccine for Children program at the Health Department if:

- You have an active Medicaid card
- You have no insurance
- You are Native American or Alaska native
- Your insurance does not cover the shot

For more information, please contact Infectious Disease Prevention Services at (618) 233-6175, ext. 4434, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

<http://www.facebook.com/SCC.HealthDepartment>

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